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Security Council

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Statement by the President of the Security Council

At the 6160th meeting of the Security Council, held on 10 July 2009, in connection with the Council's consideration of the item entitled "Peace consolidation in West Africa", the President of the Security Council made the following statement on behalf of the Council:

"The Security Council notes with satisfaction continued progress in the overall peace and security situation in West Africa. The Council especially welcomes positive developments in the areas of post-conflict recovery and peacebuilding, as well as improvements in governance and rule of law.

"The Security Council, however, notes with deep concern the resurgence of unconstitutional changes of government, undemocratic seizures of power, and, recalling the statement of its President dated 5 May 2009, stresses again the importance of expeditiously restoring constitutional order including through open and transparent elections.

"The Security Council reiterates its primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security and recalls that cooperation with regional and sub-regional organizations, consistent with Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations, can improve collective security.

"The Council welcomes the continuing important efforts of ECOWAS, in synergy with the African Union, the United Nations and the wider international community, consistent with Security Council resolutions and decisions, to settle conflicts, promote human rights, democracy, rule of law, and constitutional order in West Africa.

"The Security Council also expresses its concerns over the fact that the progress achieved remains fragile. The Council is concerned in particular by growing or emerging threats to security in West Africa, notably terrorist activities in the Sahel band, maritime insecurity in the Gulf of Guinea, and illicit drug trafficking which pose a threat to regional stability with possible impact on international security.

"The Security Council reaffirms the importance of addressing the illicit drug trafficking and criminal activities by an approach of shared responsibility, and encourages the efforts by West African States to combat illicit drug trafficking and organized crime, especially through the ECOWAS Regional Action Plan on illicit drug trafficking and organized crime The Council welcomes West African States' continued leadership in implementing this Plan

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of Action and UNOWA's role in support of the implementation of this Regional Plan of Action, and takes note of the proposal to strengthen its capacity.

"The Security Council also commends the joint action of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), UNOWA, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the Department of Political Affairs and INTERPOL to help implement the ECOWAS Plan of Action against illicit drug trafficking and organized crime, and underlines the importance for them to continue to strengthen their partnership on these issues. It also commends national and international partners such as the European Union for their support to ECOWAS in the fight against drug trafficking in West Africa.

"The Security Council stresses the importance to take into account a comprehensive strategy of conflict resolution and crisis prevention while addressing the cross-border issues and the regional challenges. The Council supports the regional efforts to curb the proliferation of small arms and light weapons and to achieve the security sector reform.

"The Security Council expresses its concern on the impact of the global economic crisis on West African economies, since the region is already confronted with development challenges such as rising food insecurity, climate change adaptation and mitigation, and youth unemployment. The Council encourages continued engagement of financial institutions and development partners to mitigate the adverse effects of the decline in economic growth and other destabilizing factors in West Africa.

"The Security Council recognizes and commends the important role played by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for West Africa and the United Nations Office for West Africa in promoting and strengthening a regional and integrated approach to cross-border issues, as well as helping consolidate peace and security, democracy and the rule of law, and requests the Secretary-General, through his Special Representative, to continue to develop further the active cooperation existing between the United Nations and regional and sub-regional organizations."